



Regional Chamber Launches New Networking Opportunity

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GODFREY – As the new year gets underway, the RiverBend Growth Association is launching its “Member Mingle” as the newest opportunity to grow and strengthen area businesses.

Starting at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 12, the group will host its first “Member Mingle” at the Post Commons, 300 Alby Street, Alton. The January sponsor is The DM Woman LLC. All members of the organization are welcome to attend, and registration

for the event can be completed through the RBGA website. There is a \$7 registration fee, and masks are required.

This new event series was developed after the Growth Association polled its members in late 2021 and discovered that most were ready for some type of in-person offerings. The motivation behind the poll that led to the launch of this new monthly member meetup was to discover a modern-day pandemic recovery answer to the question of how they could socially yet safely come together again.

Throughout 2022, the RBGA will offer these monthly Member Mingle events on an alternating morning-noon-afternoon schedule to accommodate most all schedules of its members. These new Member Mingle events add to a substantial list of member benefits and activities designed to grow and strengthen area businesses.

Previously established RBGA member programs and benefits such as Community Conversations on Diversity and Inclusion, Community and Mayor Updates, professional development programs, and other networking events continue as well.

In fact, two major events hosted each year by the RiverBend Growth Association have dates already set. The Riverbend Golf Classic will take place on June 17 at Belk Park Golf Course in Wood River, and the LeadHERship Seminar is on tap for October 7.

Any RBGA member business is welcome to host or sponsor one of the new Member Mingle events, with the benefit of being in the spotlight by doing so. Hosts and sponsors of a Member Mingle will be promoted through various event promotion efforts and will also have the chance to share a 5-minute overview of their business at the Member Mingle they are hosting or sponsoring. Other added benefits will come from the increase in traffic to one's business and the potential to gain new customers or clients.

“For this new year, and as the first of our in-person networking events since March 2020, we wanted to open the opportunity to all members to host an event or co-host with another member,” said RBGA Member Engagement Director Stefanie Withers.

“This allows the opportunity for even our smallest businesses to get their names out,” RBGA Communications Director Debbie Hagen added.

A \$250 deposit secures a member's sponsorship date, with \$100 of that amount going into the RBGA's Young Adults Committee scholarship fund. Businesses signing up as Member Mingle hosts or sponsors would supply food and beverages for the event, and member businesses are welcome to partner together as hosts and sponsors.

Spots remain on this year's Member Mingle schedule for RiverBend Growth Association members to host and/or sponsor. Committed hosts and sponsors to date, in addition to The DM Woman LLC, include State Street Market, Alton River Dragons, Andy's Automotive, Beverly Farm, OSF St. Anthony's, 1st MidAmerica Credit Union, and Bowl Haven Lanes.

For more information about hosting or sponsoring a Member Mingle or any other RBGA event, or to learn more about any of the membership benefits offered by the organization, contact Withers at (618) 467-2280 or by email at swithers@growthassociation.com. The complete schedule of events is also available on the organization's website.

The RiverBend Growth Association is the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development organization for the 11 communities known as the Riverbend. For more information about the Growth Association, please visit www.growthassociation.com or call (618) 467-2280.